

Summary of Utah laws regarding drones

HB 217 (2017) prohibits a person from intentionally, knowingly, or recklessly chasing, actively disturbing, or harming livestock through the use of UAS. Anyone who violates this law is guilty of a class B misdemeanor for the first offense and a class A misdemeanor for a subsequent offense or if livestock is seriously injured or killed or there is damage in excess of \$1,000.

SB 111 (2017) reorganizes existing laws addressing UAS. It also preempts local regulation of UAS and exempts UAS from aircraft registration in the state. The law addresses UAS use by law enforcement, allowing use for purposes unrelated to a criminal investigation. It also requires law enforcement create an official record when using UAS that provides information regarding the use of the drone and any data acquired. The law makes it a class B misdemeanor to fly a UAS that carries a weapon or has a weapon attached. Exceptions include if a person has authorization from the FAA, the state or federal government. The law also defines safe operation of unmanned aircraft, specifying operational requirements for recreational operators. The operator must maintain visual line of sight, cannot operate within certain airspace, cannot operate in a way that interferes with operations at an airport, heliport or seaplane base, cannot operate from specified locations, and must operate below 400 feet unless it is within 400 feet of a structure. Any operator who violates these requirements is liable for any damages and law enforcement shall issue a written warning for the first violation. A second violation is an infraction and any subsequent violations are class B misdemeanors. The offense of criminal trespass is modified to include drones entering and remaining unlawfully over property with specified intent. Depending on the intent, a violation is either a class B misdemeanor, a class A misdemeanor or an infraction. The law also specifies that a person is not guilty of what would otherwise be a privacy violation if the person is operating a UAS for legitimate commercial or education purposes consistent with FAA regulations. It also modifies the offense of voyeurism, a class B misdemeanor, to include the use of any type of technology, including UAS, to secretly record video of a person in certain instances

HB 126 (2016) makes it a class B misdemeanor to operate a UAS within a certain distance of a wildfire. It becomes a class A misdemeanor if the UAS causes an aircraft fighting the wildfire to drop a payload in the wrong location or to land without dropping the payload. It is a third degree felony if the UAS crashes into a manned aircraft and a second degree if that causes the manned aircraft to crash

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